

See Page 7.

Political prisoners' day of mourning

Own Correspondent

DURBAN. — Indian leaders in Durban yesterday declared Wednesday, November 10, a national day of mourning in sympathy with South Africa's political prisoners.

A resolution compiled by the Natal Indian Congress urged all Non-White businesses to close

it was read out at a meeting called in protest against the number of political detainees who have died.

The latest to die was Mr. Ahmed Timol, who plunged from the 10th floor of John Vorster Square after his arrest by the Security Police last week.

The meeting was packed to capacity with people of all races — most wearing black patches as a sign of mourning.

The speakers were Mr. Barney Pityana, general secretary of South African Students' Organisation, (SASO), Mrs. Fatima Meer, Dr. Farouk Meer, and Mr. Rabbi Bhagwandien, executive members of the NIC.

ALARM

All expressed alarm at the growing number of political arrests in the country and branded them as Government "intimidation" tactics.

Mr. Bhagwandien, an executive member of the NIC, said: "If we have to pay the final penalty that Ahmed Timol paid, let us pay it — it is worth dying for."

The full text of the resolution proposed by the congress was: "We call on all oppressed people in South Africa to observe a national day of mourning on Wednesday, November 10, 1971, and to withdraw completely from all spheres of commerce and industry as a sign of protest."

Hundreds at the Timol funeral

IMPATIENT MOTORISTS leaned on their hooters yesterday as a seemingly endless stream of white-capped Indians held up traffic for more than a dozen blocks at a time in Roodepoort.

Schoolgirls pressing handkerchiefs to their faces, T-shirted Whites engaged in serious talk with immaculately dressed Muslims — they all formed part of the 1500 mourners following the hearse of Ahmed Timol.

The funeral procession for the 30-year-old schoolteacher, who plunged 10 floors to his death on Wednesday, was the biggest the little West Rand town had seen.

After a 3km trek, the green velvet bier with its golden tassels was lifted from the hearse outside the Roodepoort Muslim cemetery.

HAND BY HAND

Shoulder-high, hand by hand, it was passed through the crowd. When the congregation broke into mass prayer, loud sobbing rose from the ranks of children whom Mr Timol had taught up to last week.

To chants of "Allah is great and Mohammed is his Prophet" the body was laid to rest.

The dead man's grey-bearded father, Mr Yusuf Timol (65), joined in the chant. A brother, Haron Timol (19), sobbed on a friend's shoulder.

Another brother, Mr Mohamed Timol (22), is in Security Police detention in

Durban. A third, Mr Ismael Timol (26) is studying in India.

The mother, Mrs Hawa Timol, remained at home. "According to Muslim rites, the men bury the dead," a relative said.

Earlier, Mrs Timol had stood at the window of her first-floor flat in Mare Street, watching the throng that filled the street.

Stern-faced or crying, the community had filed past the bier for a last glance of Ahmed Timol, clad in his white funeral "kafan" with his face exposed.

The crowd in the Roodepoort street had formed at 1.30 pm when scores of school children and students of the Johannesburg Indian College of Education staged a "sit-in."

As the crowd grew into a sea of white prayer caps, traffic police cordoned off the street.

The body arrived at the Timol's home at about 2.30 pm. It was released from police custody at noon, after the post-mortem examination. Then it was taken to the Newtown Mosque for "Friday prayers" and ritual bathing, which precedes the funeral.

When the last mourner had turned his back on the grave, a thunder shower broke from the overcast sky.